

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—I have never denied that flogging is a deterrent. Lord Salvesen, on the other hand, claims that it is incomparably more efficient than less savage penalties. To prove this he gave in his last letter a large number of so-called facts. I had no difficulty in showing that practically every statement he made was wildly incorrect. If flogging really produces the marvellous results Lord Salvesen believes, those results must be obvious and easy to demonstrate. Why then had he to bolster up his case with imaginative inaccuracies? Why does he not now overwhelm me with statistical evidence? The answer is simple; there is no such evidence. The Government Committee on Corporal Punishment summed up the matter in their Report. "After examining all the available evidence we are unable to find any body of facts or figures showing that the introduction of the power of flogging has produced a decrease in the number of offences." If Lord Salvesen disagrees with the report let him (or any other supporter of flogging) produce the facts the Committee were unable to find.

Lord Salvesen still tries to argue that immoral traffic has been wiped out by the "cat" in Scotland. I can only repeat that the Criminal Statistics published by the Scottish Office show (a) that it is still a fairly common offence, and (b) that it is commoner now than before it was made floggable.

On the Death Penalty Lord Salvesen has shifted his ground. He now admits by implication the basis of my contention that certainty of conviction is more important than savagery of punishment.

I am sorry Lord Salvesen found my last letter lengthy. It consisted largely of a tabulation of his inaccuracies together with the real facts. Had he been more accurate my letter would have been shorter.

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Dysgenic Effects of War*To the Editor, Eugenics Review*

SIR,—While all will agree with your editorial note that war is dysgenic, it is too early to assume that this war is more dysgenic than the last as regards this country. In the first two years of this war our casualties have been stated to be about 200,000: in the first two years of last war our casualties in France were just under a million and in Gallipoli 200,000; in addition we had large losses in Mesopotamia and in four African campaigns, besides losses at sea and elsewhere. The total casualties must therefore have been seven or eight times those of the present war. On whom did these losses chiefly fall? The infantry. On whom in the infantry? The company officers, whose losses were twice as severe as those of the men they led. Who were the junior company officers? Anyone suitable to be an officer not possessing technical qualifications for other branches. I turned up my school register and abstracted the figures of those killed for a period of years. The figures were over 40 per cent of the total from the school killed in action. Of 285 killed in this period, 137 were professional soldiers and 148 temporary officers. These latter included 20 who had won scholarships at the universities, of whom 16 were in the infantry and 22 other university graduates of whom 13 were in the infantry. The regular soldiers included 9 R.E. officers. Twenty-five per cent of the 285 killed had their school colours for some branch of athletics. Of course, we do not know what the future may have in store for us.

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*This correspondence on Crime and Punishment
is now closed.—EDITOR*
